

West-Cap Project Area (Part of the TIAA CERCLA Site)

Boundaries:

The West-Cap project area is in Area B of the Tucson International Airport Area (TIAA) site, just south of the Texas Instruments project area and southeast of the Arizona Air National Guard (AANG) project area. It is located at 2207 East Elvira Road between Plumer Avenue and South Tucson Boulevard.

Site History:

- From the early 1960's to the early 1980's, the property was occupied by the former West-Cap of Arizona Corporation which manufactured small film capacitors and magnets and used solvents as part of their manufacturing process.
- West-Cap manufacturing and disposal practices resulted in the release of hazardous wastes (mainly trichloroethene (TCE) and 1,1,1-trichloroethane (1,1,1-TCA)) into the soil and groundwater.
- The TIAA site was placed on the National Priorities List (NPL) in 1983.
- In 1988, a record of decision (ROD) for the regional groundwater at TIAA was issued by EPA. This ROD also covered groundwater contamination in Area B which includes the West-Cap project area.
- In January 1992, a groundwater pump and treat system for Texas Instruments began. This system apparently captured some West-Cap contamination and spread it northward.
- Between March 1997 and November 1999, the pump and treat system at Texas Instruments was discontinued while EPA built a groundwater extraction system at the West-Cap project area.
- In 1996, a shallow soil gas survey was conducted by EPA. This survey identified two potential source areas with elevated levels of TCE, tetrachloroethene (PCE), 1,1,1-TCA, and 1,1-dichloroethene (1,1-DCE).
- In 1998, as part of an EPA-sponsored removal action, several groundwater extraction wells were installed. These wells pump TCE contaminated groundwater northward to the Texas Instruments water treatment plant where it is cleaned and used in manufacturing processes.

Site Status:

- West-Cap is an EPA funded site, meaning that no existing or financially viable responsible party has been identified.

- EPA's groundwater removal action has removed approximately 3.28 pounds of TCE and PCE from about 72 million gallons of groundwater.
- A pilot soil vapor extraction (SVE) system was operated, and data from the pilot test are being used to design an expanded SVE system to remove TCE from the soils.
- Two new groundwater monitoring wells have recently been installed. One of these wells (WC-9) shows TCE contamination northwest of the West-Cap property on the Airport Property. Further investigations are needed to determine the extent of contamination on the Airport Property.
- Some groundwater contamination from West-Cap has apparently also migrated westward toward the AANG project area where it is extracted and treated in the AANG treatment plant.
- In May 2002, a remedial investigation (RI) addendum and a feasibility study report were completed. By Fall 2003, EPA plans to issue an amended ROD for groundwater at this site.
- EPA and ADEQ are assessing the possible interaction between the Texas Instruments extraction wells and those at West Cap just to the southwest.

Site Hydrogeology:

- In Area B of the TIAA site, which includes the West-Cap project area, the regional aquifer is comprised of two aquifer zones separated by a middle aquitard. The middle aquitard limits the vertical extent of contamination to the upper zone of the regional aquifer which is about 70 to 100 feet thick. The upper zone of the regional aquifer can also be further subdivided into upper and lower subunits.
- The lateral continuity of the upper and lower subunits is difficult to estimate due to heterogeneities resulting from the meandering streams that deposited these sediments. In places, the streams deposited relatively coarse-grained sands and gravels, but in other areas fine-grained overbank and floodplain deposits were left behind.
- Due to the spatially variable erosional and depositional history, in some areas the upper and lower coarse-grained subunit may not exist, and the upper zone of the regional aquifer may be locally composed of almost entirely fine-grained sediments.
- The upper zone of the regional aquifer extends from the water table at a depth of about 85 to 100 feet below ground surface (bgs), to the top of the middle aquitard at a depth of about 175 feet bgs.
- The groundwater flow direction in the upper zone of the regional aquifer is generally toward the northwest, but flow within the coarse-grained upper and lower subunits is more toward the west.

- More detailed descriptions of the hydrogeology of the AANG project area can be found in reports and studies available at the TIAA Information Repository.

Contaminants:

The current contaminants of concern in groundwater include volatile organic compounds (VOCs), mainly TCE. TCE concentrations range from non-detect to about 410 parts per billion (ppb). Contaminants of concern at the site may change as new data become available.

Public Health Impact:

All municipal wells in the area that were contaminated with TCE have been shut down. Most of the domestic wells have either been shut down or converted to irrigation wells. However, a few residents with domestic wells with low levels of TCE have chosen to continue using their wells.

Community Involvement Activities:

The unified community advisory board (UCAB) conducts public meetings to discuss the site the third Wednesday of every other month (starting in January). Recent EPA fact sheets include: EPA Proposes Plan to Address Groundwater Contamination at West-Cap and West Plume B Project Areas (June 2002).

Information Repository:

Interested parties can review site information at the information repository at the TCE Superfund Information Library located at 101 W. Irvington Road, within the El Pueblo Branch Library in Tucson, (520) 791-4733. Site information is also available at both ADEQ's Southern Regional Office located at 400 W. Congress, Suite 433 in Tucson, and the main office located at 1110 West Washington Street, Phoenix. Files are available for review Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please call (520) 770-3361 to arrange a file review appointment at the Southern Regional Office or the ADEQ Records Center (602) 771-4378 or (800) 234-5677 (Arizona toll-free).

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*In Arizona, but outside the Tucson area, call toll-free at (888) 271-9302.

**Call EPA's toll-free message line at (800) 231-3075.